

Appendix C: Discourses and alternative stories according to various themes from axial coding

Discourses (D) according to themes

1 - First participant

Theme 1: In relationship to anger and frustration

D1 – Anger about my husband’s work load and peer pressure from his colleagues affects my relationship with my husband on a regular basis.

D2 – I am angry on a regular basis and this does not feel nice.

D47 – I think that if I lose weight my husband will change his attitude towards me, but why should I?

D51 – I am angry when my husband’s friends convince him that I sit on his head.

D52 – It frustrates me when my husband believes that he must put their needs above mine.

D61 – I am very angry when my husband spends time away from me.

D106 – After I have overeaten I experience anger towards myself.

Theme 2: In relationship to fear, loneliness and rejection

D7 – I am afraid of being alone.

D8 – I am afraid to sleep alone and that’s why my husband must come home on time.

D86 – I think that my fear of rejection and being alone could be related to what happened in my childhood.

D91 – I am afraid of accumulating more weight during pregnancy.

D94 – I am afraid that the gynaecologist will tell me to stop eating because I am too fat.

D122 – During overeating I experience a fear of being alone and the food keeps me company.

Theme 3: In relationship to love / hate and comfort

D41 – I believe that loving my husband means to sacrifice myself so that he will love me back.

D45 – I want to be loved and accepted for who I am by my husband.

D46 – If my husband doesn’t love me in a certain way, I don’t allow him sexual intercourse.

D69 – My child is a source of support and companionship.

D107 – I comfort myself with food.

D111 – Overeating is a basic refuge or a comfort so that I will feel better for a short while.

D123 – Every time I have been upset in my life the tornado has been there for me.

Theme 4: In relationship to sadness and hurt

D67 – I fear people to be close to me because often they gossip about me and then I feel hurt.

D68 – I don't want everyone to see my feelings of hurt.

D103 – After I have overeaten it results in physical and emotional pain.

Theme 5: In relationship to guilt

D4 – I feel guilty for fighting with my husband when he comes late from work.

D74 – I feel guilty when I refuse to lose weight when others try and force me.

D75 – In the context of visiting the Gynaecologist I just need to go even though I am ashamed of my weight.

D90 – I feel guilty to weigh myself at the gynaecologist.

D92 – I feel guilty and ashamed being overweight.

D109 – At the end of the eating process I feel guilty and blame myself.

D114 – I feel guilty every time I overeat and then I overeat even more.

Theme 6: In relationship to inferiority

D25 – I am not good enough in my husband's eyes and this makes me feel rejected.

D33 – My feelings and thoughts are not important to my husband.

D35 – My husband always knows more or better and therefore he must take the responsibility for making me feel better about myself.

D50 – I want my husband to love me for who I am, but feel as if I am nothing special and am being treated like a doormat.

D57 - My husband's needs are more important than my own.

D71 – I feel taken for granted.

D73 - When other people have negative feelings toward me, I feel bad about myself.

D112 – The effect of the overeating process is that I feel worse about myself; therefore overeating is a discomfort and not a refuge.

D121 – Ideal times for overeating bouts are when I put myself down or sacrifice my own time for others.

D125 – I overeat, because sometimes I feel taken for granted.

Theme 7: In relationship to mistrust

D18 – I believe that men cannot be trusted when women don't give them sex and they will find it else- where.

D20 – Everything will be ok between me and my husband although I do not believe this is true.

D23 – I mistrust my husband and this gives me the right to overeat.

D31 – I think I want to trust my husband, I tell myself that I do and I must, but I don't really trust him, because he does not live up to my very strict expectations.

D42 – When I experience doubts and mistrust in various areas of my relationship with my husband, it is necessary to just go on even to my own detriment and unhappiness.

D60 – I don't know if I can trust my husband because I think he could have had an affair.

Theme 8: Internalised beliefs

D14 – It is the right of my husband not to have sex during my pregnancy, because of my weight gain during pregnancy, this made me eat more.

D38 – I want my relationship with my husband to be perfect like it was in the beginning.

D39 – I want my husband to be my knight in shining armour.

D55 – I believe that the standard for spiritual connectedness between a man and a woman means to spend time together by just talking and being close but not sexually intimate.

D59 – I have the right to know where my husband is.

D63 – I think that all men are alike with regards to their sexual desires.

D72 – It is important what other people think of me.

D93 – I believe that something bad will happen to my unborn child, because I am overweight.

D99 – I believe that it is hard work to lose weight.

D100 – I believe I cannot lose weight, but I want to lose weight, but all those salads and gym discourages me.

Theme 9: Body perceptions

D77 – I think I am fat and ugly.

Theme 10: Voices of control

D13 – Circumstances surrounding the wedding prevented me from sitting still and thinking about what I was doing or getting myself into. When I reflect upon this time period I wonder how I did it and I have a sense of disillusionment thus a sense of passively giving into the greater pressure of circumstances never mind my feelings on the matter.

D19 – I am happy or sad depending on how my husband experiences himself and relates to me in a non- stressful, peaceful and happy way or not.

D48 – I expect my husband to change before I will change in my eating pattern.

D54 – I will not lose weight because my husband pressures me to lose weight by saying:” Are you eating again?”

D70 – It is important to be in control of people and my circumstances.

D88 – I experienced social pressure to lose weight from family, school and dieticians since my childhood.

D101 – I don't have the time to lose weight, because there are more important things in life than losing weight.

D118 – The chaos of the tornado has an overwhelming effect on me...it numbs me and renders me helpless.

D127 – I think that other people think that if you overeat you are out of control and therefore not coping.

D128 – I feel overwhelmed and restless when I am out of control with regards to my eating habits.

Theme 11: Overeating in action

D6 – I overeat because my husband doesn't spend time with me or my child.

D34 – I overeat to avoid conflict in my relationship with my husband.

D44 – I overeat because of financial difficulty and not communicating with my husband about finances.

D56 – I overeat when my husband does not respect me and treat me like a queen.

D64 – I overeat when I see my husband lusting after other women

D66 – I overeat when my husband does not do what I expect of him.

D84 – I link the molestation to a tornado being my overeating process as a rush where I cannot sit down and take time to think about what I am doing.

D102 – I passively overeat while spending time with my child and in front of the TV.

D105 – I overeat when I feel afraid when my husband is late from work.

D108 – During the process of the binge my brain works overtime, eating happens automatically, over active thinking process, and this leads to worry.

D110 – When I am afraid of being alone I overeat.

D113 – Overeating could be a friend or an enemy

D115 – During the overeating process my brain works overtime.

D117 – Overeating is like a tornado experience...like a wind that twirls.

D126 – When I feel helpless, I try to focus my thoughts on other things by eating in excess.

D129 – Passive activities, like watching TV makes me want to overeat.

D130 – Overeating makes me feel better about myself just for a moment.

D131 – I overeat when people come late for their appointments, because it makes me feel discouraged.

D116 – Overeating process leads to confusion in thought patterns and there is a period of blankness in my mind.

Theme 12: Communication in action

D5 – My husband and I don't know how to communicate with one another with regards to his work situation

D16 – I feel that my voice is not being heard, I demand to be heard by others.

D22 – My husband must know me and understand what I am saying even though I don't know or want to know myself.

D24 – When I relate how I think and feel, my husband does not respond in a way that I feel heard or listened to.

D32 – Confrontations are futile, therefore I do not have to take part in a confronting situation, because it does not help anyway.

D40 – I am not allowed to let myself be heard because my husband is more important than I am.

D49 – I have tried different coping skills like ignorance, confrontation and the silent treatment and talking nicely in relationship to my husband and none of them were helpful and this makes me feel helpless.

D76 – I try to hide myself behind an iron curtain or behind a cupboard rather than interacting with others.

D78 – Sometimes it is better to be withdrawn from others and be by myself, because this place is not so lonely.

Theme 13: Blaming in action

D3 – I blame my husband for not spending enough time with me and my child.

D9 – I blame my husband for enjoying his life with friends and I am suffering alone at home.

D15 – I blame my husband for my overweight.

D17 – I blame my husband for not having sex with me even though I don't have sex with him or don't want to have sex with him for long periods of time.

D21 – I blame my husband for my fear with regards to my possible failure in the workplace.

D65 – I feel disillusioned in my marriage and I blame my husband for that.

D104 – I blame myself, feel guilty and then feel angry after overeating and this feels not so nice.

Theme 14: In relationship to stressful situations

D36 – I overeat when under stress, and then I have the right to not stop and think about my feelings, thoughts and actions at the moment.

D120 – When circumstances are chaotic I sit down and overeat and then experience anger about the amount that I have eaten and I have eaten to get rid of thoughts that stress me.

D124 – When I experience stress and think of past painful experiences, I need to overeat.

Theme 15: In relationship to traumatic experiences

D79 – It is too painful to re-experience and fully express my thoughts and feelings surrounding the molestation during my childhood.

D80 – It is better to forget and not talk about the painful molestation experience.

D81 – As a child I had no control over the molestation, because I was so small and now as an adult I sometimes feel out of control when unforeseen things happen.

D82 – I feel anxious when talking about painful experiences.

D83 – I don't want to talk or feel the painful experience again, I want to forget by overeating.

D85 – I cannot make meaning out of my childhood molestation experience, because it is meaningless what happened to me.

D87 – When being molested, I felt left just like this and that is it.

D119 – The tornado has always been there, linking it to something that happened to me when I was very small.

Theme 16: Familial themes and voices

D10 – A child – my child comes first at all costs even though that would mean that I come last, but blaming my child is unacceptable. Children come first no matter what!

D11 – I married a man who is just like my father.

D27 – My husband and father both want me to serve them and this is ok because my mother served my father and this is what women do.

D28 – I must do things for my husband, things that I really don't want to do, but I do it anyway.

D29 – My mother's voice: "a man is the boss and a woman is the slave".

D37 – I must protect my children against adults that don't care for them.

D43 – I like to mother my husband with regards to his responsibility in the household.

D53 – I believe that family time is of the utmost importance and cannot be bought or compromised by material things, but it is important to spend time together.

D58 – I believe that the sign of a happy family is the presence of a consistent and steadfast mother figure, even though the mother stands alone.

D62 – I believe in my husband's mother's voice: Men can look on the menu, but they must eat at home.

D98 – I believe that my family and I can lose weight, but we have to restrict ourselves highly with food intake to accomplish this.

Theme 17: Socio-cultural power and voices

D12 – I believe that if a girl becomes pregnant before marriage she has to marry the father of the baby.

D26 – I think that many people think that "Men are kings, women are slaves".

D30 – I think that women buy into being servants of men, even though they don't want to.

Theme 18: Living with an overweight identity

D89 – I have been struggling with being overweight since my childhood.

D95 – I believe that my thyroid gland has an influence on me being overweight.

D96 – I believe that genetics has caused me to be overweight, because there are many in our family who are overweight.

D97 – I have a lot of information about different diets and methods of weight-loss, but feel that diets have failed me in the past and that surgical procedures are dangerous and not a solution.

2 - Second participant

Theme 1: In relationship to anger and frustration

D1 – Anger towards husband's expectations for me to lose weight just like his mother before he will accept me, unlike my child's unconditional acceptance for who I am no matter how much I weigh.

D2 – My husband thinks that my child will become ashamed of me if I do not lose my weight and this angers me.

D3 – I am jealous and angry with my husband because he is allowed to become fit and thereby have control over his weight and I am not allowed to spend time exercising, because of my responsibilities towards the children.

D5 – It angers me when I make excuses for my husband to my own detriment.

D9 – I am angry with my husband when he takes me for granted, but I realise that I am the one that gives into his demands and this makes me angry with myself.

D22 – It is unacceptable for me when some people tease other fat people about their weight.

D23 - I feel angry and hurt for others in the same fat predicament as me.

D24 – When some people make subtle comments about other fat people I become angry, because I know that if they do it to them they will do it to me too, because I am fat too.

D32 – It angers me when society has the perception that a fat person is stupid or is not fit to do a certain job.

D33 – It angers me when society expects a fat person to use wonder treatments to lose weight.

D35 – I am angry when fat people are being exploited in beauty pageants as if they are in a circus and people have the right to make fun of them.

D63 – My mother's voice that certain types of clothes make me look fatter in the eyes of others angers me.

D64 – In the context of being the youngest child in my family of origin, certain responsibilities were often taken out of my hands, simply because it was easier to allow the older children or my parents to take the responsibility. This left me with an angry feeling of if you think I cannot do it, I will show you that I cannot do it.

D72 – It angers me when others take control out of my hands in doing tasks without me giving them permission to do so, therefore it is their entire fault if I do not complete or attempt to do the tasks.

D81 – I become very angry when some people treat fat people unfairly.

D84 – I am irritated with myself for not choosing to eat healthy.

D87 – I am angry at myself for allowing myself to place my husband and my children's needs above my own.

D92 – It often frustrates me when I can't connect my intuition and intellectual reasoning to my emotional expression of painful experiences.

D98 – It angers me when people ask whether my overweight is caused by my genetic make up and they ask what do your brothers and sisters look like?

Theme 2: In relationship to fear, loneliness and rejection

D53 – I sometimes use my responsibility towards my children as an excuse to choose not to exercise and eat healthy, because I am afraid of failure.

D54 – My fear of failure immobilises me to not start exercising and eating healthy again.

D82 – I am afraid of being alone.

D91 – I want to be thin, but I am not prepared to work at it, in fear of unwanted attention from men and also from myself that I am sexually attractive.

D93 – I yield to procrastination in fear of failure.

Theme 3: In relationship to love / hate and comfort

D36 – I hate it when thin people or slightly overweight people have the audacity to express how fat they feel, but they don't have the faintest idea how it feels to be fat.

D108 – In the context of a childhood sexual exploration experience with my brother and making sense of it in a therapeutic context in the past leads me to thinking that I am not allowed to focus attention on me being unjustly treated by men thus the unwanted attention of men translates for me to the needed emotional and nurturing attention that I am not allowed to give myself. This forces me to find nurturance and comfort in my relationship with food in excess, because the attention is then on food and not on me.

Theme 4: In relationship to sadness and hurt

D30 – Society expects from me to hear their negative comments about me, but they don't want to listen how painful and hurtful their comments are.

D65 – I experienced pain when others did not believe that I can't do certain tasks in my childhood and this made me believe that they are right.

D78 – Crying in front of others makes you vulnerable to their judgement and they can take advantage of you.

D79 – I do not show my emotions, but this does not mean that I do not experience emotions.

Theme 5: In relationship to guilt

D48 – Sometimes when I want to express my opinion about a certain subject in a group of people, I prevent myself from doing so because I feel ashamed of my overweight body.

D60 – I am very careful in new situations so that I will not shame myself.

D66 – I experience fear of failure and feelings of guilt, the moment I am challenged by others to take responsibility for my own health.

D67 – I don't achieve or start working on my goals to take responsibility for my own health, because I expect too much of myself and I am very hard on myself to perform perfectly.

D80 – I feel guilty when I think bad things about others and when I am angry with them.

Theme 6: In relationship to inferiority

D6 – It is important to place my own needs below the needs of my husband.

D7 – In my marriage I am everybody's caregiver to the detriment of myself.

D11 – I sometimes don't understand my husband for only thinking of himself and his needs, because I believe that others' needs are more important than your own.

D12 – It is important to please others and my husband to the detriment of myself.

D40 – Other people's opinions are more important than mine.

D49 – Sometimes low self-worth can be a hindrance to my self-confidence.

D55 – I am not good enough because I don't know how to do things "right" in the eyes of significant others and that is why I rather won't do things with reference to a healthy lifestyle.

D56 – I believe that I am not really good enough, because I am a failure.

D57 – My head tells me that when somebody tells me I cannot do something, I respond by saying then I shall show you I cannot do it, when they say I can't do it, then I can't and I won't even take the time to try to do it, because I also believe that I can't do it.

Theme 7: In relationship to mistrust

D61 – I know that I have high standards for myself, because I mistrust my intuition, because sometimes when I do trust my intuition others criticised me and then I believe that I am judged according to others expectations of me.

D73 – I don't trust others to help me with difficult tasks, thus I don't need others to tell me how I must reach a healthy lifestyle.

Theme 8: Internalised beliefs

D10 – It is important not to show my anger towards my husband when he takes me for granted, because men should be held in high regard at all times.

D14 – I am a married woman and therefore I must now do what my husband wants me to do.

D28 - I believe that others have negative perceptions of me in general.

D39 – It is important to show people that I can eat right and be fit.

D59 – My voice of rebellion says "I don't want to, because I don't want to, because I don't want to lose weight, just because others expect it from me."

D69 – I want others to accept my reasons for not wanting to lose weight, because it is very obvious that I am trying to lose weight.

D71 – I sometimes experience intellectual understanding of my painful experiences, but expression of my emotions is hindered by my thinking that my mothers' family do not cry or show appropriate emotions during painful experiences; therefore I do not show my emotions easily to others.

D74 – Children cannot complete tasks as adequately as adults.

D86 – I need to put a switch on in my mind to be able to start with a healthy lifestyle.

D102 - To be pregnant and to have children gives me the right to overeat.

D104 – Overeating habits aren't as important to change as to have good exercise habits.

Theme 9: Body perceptions

D17 – My body image is only a by-product, but it is not who I really am, but it is the inner me that counts in relationship to others.

D19 – I am judged by others within my work environment according to how I look, because it is part of my work image to present a good body image.

D29 – Even though I want people to accept me for who I am and not for how I look, I am very conscious of the fact that I am very visible.

D50 – Example of who I am, is different to how I look: Who I am – I would like to participate in fun and games (physical activities), but how I look influences the fact that I prefer not to participate because of being ashamed of my fat body.

D51 – I am discouraged when I look at my body, because I don't like what I see and I know that I can look better.

D89 – I have confidence in what I can do and in my own abilities, but I don't have confidence in my physical appearance, therefore my self-worth is low.

D97 – Fat is unacceptable, Fat is ugly, Fat is wrong, Fat restricts your activities.

Theme 10: Voices of control

D27 – I am over sensitive to other's perception of my overweight.

D45 – I have to take other people into consideration to the detriment of myself and therefore I feel powerless and out of control.

D52 – My children changed my life to the extent that I feel trapped in the sense that I can no longer come and go as I please.

D68 – Other things are always more important to do than to take responsibility for my eating patterns and exercising.

D85 – To have control over my life equals to have control over my food habits and exercise habits.

D105 – Overeating makes me feel out of control.

D110 – By controlling my emotions, I am controlling the expression of my emotions in front of others so that I allow myself to be out of control with my eating habits.

Theme 11: Overeating in action

D103 – Depression leads to overeating.

D107 – I overeat in the context where others and my own expectations are too demanding for me to reach plausible goals with regards to a healthy lifestyle.

D109 – When I experience strong emotions I escape them without expressing them through my overeating patterns.

D111 – Overeating is a way of treating me after ignoring myself and my need to express my emotions like anger and hurt.

D112 – I overeat when I feel guilty about thinking bad things about others.

Theme 12: Communication in action

D21 – Constant feedback from others with regards to my fat body makes me believe that I am unacceptable as a person and that I cannot do my work.

D31 – I have to always be the one in relationships to hear others' opinions, once again I am the one that has to listen to them without any one hearing my opinions.

D37 – I am not allowed to tell others that I am frustrated and angry that they don't hear me.

D62 – Feedback I get from my work environment about my overweight makes me feel ashamed, humiliated, unacceptable and bad about myself.

D83 – The feeling that I am not being heard and loneliness makes me feel tied down and in a cocoon.

D88 – Most of the time I don't know how to express myself or how to communicate with others about how I am feeling and thinking about certain situations, people and myself.

D106 – If I do not express how I feel and think on a regular basis, it leads to anger and frustration with myself and then I feel depressed and overeat.

Theme 13: Blaming in action

D8 – I blame my husband for not taking my needs into consideration.

D13 – I blame my husband and myself for not helping me to have a healthy lifestyle since my marriage and pregnancies.

D38 – In my struggle to believe that I am acceptable, I blame the media and society for making me believe that I am unacceptable for being a fat person.

Theme 14: In relationship to stressful situations

No relevant discourses.

Theme 15: In relationship to traumatic experiences

D75 – In the context of loss of my two week old brother in my childhood I experienced that it is a taboo subject and that it does not help to cry about his death or talk about his death, we must just go on with our lives.

Theme 16: Familial themes and voices

D15 – My mother’s voice with regards to others being overweight makes me feel that I am at an unacceptable weight; and therefore I am unacceptable as a person.

D41 – I use my children as an excuse to not have a healthy lifestyle.

D42 – It is important to take care of my children even though I do not allow myself to blame them for my unhealthy lifestyle.

D43 – My responsibilities as a mother causes me to lose control over my healthy lifestyle.

D44 – I am a bad mother if my children aren’t with me the whole day.

D47 – My mother needed to push aside many of her dreams in early years of her marriage and therefore I am pushing many of my dreams aside at the moment.

D96 – My children are not supposed to have an issue with me as their mother being overweight, because they must be very accepting.

Theme 17: Socio-cultural power and voices

D4 – Afrikaner, Christian men are the head of the household and they can come and go as they please, while the wife is the mother and caregiver to the children.

D18 – I am judged by others in terms of how I look and this makes me unacceptable.

D20 – Other people have the perception that I cannot do my work adequately, because I don’t fit into my uniform.

D25 – People in general are judgemental towards fat people.

D26 – My mother’s voice that she was always right about how fat I am, is a confirmation of others’ negative critique with regards to my overweight.

D34 – The Afrikaners are fat, because they love eating meat.

D46 – It is an Afrikaner tradition that the “Wife is submissive towards her husband and it is expected of the wife to be at home when her husband comes home from work and then everything must be under control in the household”.

D58 – I am rebellious against the voice of society that says that I have to be thin in order to be successful.

D70 – In the era of the 1970 and 80’s a person’s sexuality was considered a taboo subject.

D76 – In 1970 children were allowed to be seen but not heard and family members didn’t talk about painful experiences or express their emotions, but now in 1990 families communicate more and children’s voices are allowed to be heard.

D77 – In the context of my father being a pastor I believed that my needs were less important than the congregation that he was serving, therefore considering others and serving others is an important Christian virtue.

D95 – Fat is unacceptable and thin is acceptable.

Theme 18: Living with an overweight identity

D16 – Accept me for whom I am, and not just for how I look, but for who I am.

D90 - I link my self-confidence to who I am and my self worth to how I look.

D94 – After my wedding I accumulated a lot of weight especially during my two pregnancies.

D99 – Since an early age I matured faster than my peers which gave the impression to others and me that I was fatter than I really was.

D100 – Others perception that I am not necessarily fat, but that certain clothing or eating a piece of cake would make me fatter in essence gave the message that I am fatter than I am.

D101 – To lose weight is a conscious process, but I will rather want it to be unconscious so that I am not reminded of the fact that I am overweight all the time.

3 - Third participant

Theme 1: In relationship to anger and frustration

D1 – Anger and blame towards my husband for not accepting me with regards to my overweight in the context of my first pregnancy and that he was not ready to be a father when I became a mother affected me to pick up 40kg.

D2 – It angers me when my husband equates thinness with beauty.

D9 – I am angry at my husband for setting certain rules of what I should or should not eat.

D15 – I believe that I must be submissive to my husband and this angers me.

D41 – I am angry when my mother says that my dress makes me look thinner and therefore I look pretty.

D58 – Clothes sometimes hide away who I am and it makes me feel that people don't see me as a person but see my clothes as beautiful. Therefore people could just as well have the clothes.

Theme 2: In relationship to fear, loneliness and rejection

D32 – My fear that my daughter will also struggle with overweight gives me the right to overly control her eating habits.

D36 – I am afraid that I will die early, because of my family's medical history of early deaths.

D67 – Family history of health risks with regards to overweight makes me fearful to keep on being overweight, but not fearful enough to take action.

D68 – I must do something about my overweight for fear of health risks.

D94 – When I overeat in secret where nobody can see me, I am afraid that I might be caught.

Theme 3: In relationship to love / hate and comfort

D10 – I believe that my husband doesn't love me as he used to, because even he thinks and says that I must watch out because I have become fat.

D11 – Nobody can love like I can love.

D44 – I believe that I am not worthy to be loved.

D80 – I overeat to comfort myself.

D89 – I reward myself with food.

D90 – Overeating calms me down for a moment.

D95 – When I keep quiet to the detriment of myself, I overeat, because it is like I punished myself and therefore I must be comforted.

Theme 4: In relationship to sadness and hurt

D34 – I feel sad and discouraged that others have not listened to my deepest feelings and thoughts in the past.

Theme 5: In relationship to guilt

D51 – After I overeat I feel guilty about going overboard.

D70 – Guilt surrounding my relationship with food in excess has a negative influence on my daughter's relationship with food.

D87 – I feel guilty after overeating and then I feel and look like a pig and then I feel negative about myself.

Theme 6: In relationship to inferiority

D3 – I am not sexually pleasing enough for my husband, because of my overweight and therefore I am not good enough as a person.

D30 – When I am the least in relationship to others, it is a privilege because I am carrying others' burdens this gives me the power of "holiness".

D45 – I sometimes think that everybody is superior to me, because I don't have any control over food or any other areas of my life.

Theme 7: In relationship to mistrust

D12 – I mistrust my husband's love for me in the context of painful experiences.

D72 – I mistrust myself to lose big amounts of weight and to get to goal weight.

Theme 8: Internalised beliefs

D4 – I withhold sexual intercourse from my husband, because I am not as bad as those bad girls on TV.

D5 – I believe that sex should be seen by men as a holy and a beautiful thing between a husband and a wife and not as something filthy and disgusting.

D7 – I believe that women are supposed to eat less than men and men have the right to judge women if they eat the same amount or just as much as them.

D16 – I think that my husband thinks that I only look pretty when I lose weight and when I am thin.

D17 – I think my husband does not think that I can lose the weight, whereas, in fact I also don't believe I can.

D19 – Although I know that losing weight to be healthy is important, I rather want to lose weight so that my husband will accept me more and find me more attractive.

D21 – I will not lose weight for my husband because he expects me to.

D22 – I believe that my husband could easily find a nicer and prettier woman and therefore I threaten him and myself to lose weight just so that I can take revenge on him for not accepting me just as I am.

D23 – I believe that during pregnancy it is allowed for women to eat for two, to gain a lot of weight, because after the baby's birth you will lose the weight again.

D25 – Others need to accept me for my inner being more and not judge me according to my physical appearance.

D26 – I think that men treat women like sexual objects.

D27 – I think that if I am round and fat everything is going happy and well in my life.

D38 – All thin people are judgemental towards fat people.

D40 – Sometimes I feel that others judge me according to which clothes I wear and how I look, rather than seeing me as a beautiful person. Others judge beauty according to my attire and not for who I am.

D42 – In the context of my life before my marriage I did not ever think that I would become fat, because I never had a problem with my weight.

D47 – My inner being is more important than my physical appearance.

D50 – I am the type of person who loves to eat good food.

D57 – I cannot live without nice food.

D65 – If I want to lose weight I need to draw the line somewhere.

D74 – I always have tomorrow to start to lose weight.

D75 – Please God, if I can't be thin, please make my friends fat.

D76 – I know that I will never be thin but please don't let me be the only fat person.

D77 – I stop myself from losing weight, because I am not ready for it now.

D91 – After overeating the feeling better about me is more important to me than the guilt.

Theme 9: Body perceptions

D20 – Sometimes I feel disgusted with regards to my body image and I feel even more disgusted in myself when I consider how disgusting my husband perceives me and my body

D43 – I tell myself sometimes that I am ugly and nobody will love me, because I am fat.

D48 – If I am not thin I am not beautiful.

D49 – The experience of overweight is a day to day struggle, one day I have a good and the other day I have a bad body image.

Theme 10: Voices of control

D31 – I am in control when I am the peacekeeper, because others depend on me so that they won't fall apart.

D33 – Significant others must support me in my weight-loss endeavour, because I can't do it by myself.

D46 - Food is my boss.

D56 – To have a strong will power will give me more control over my unhealthy eating habits.

D71 – I am waiting for something to happen to trigger me to start to lose weight and this makes me wonder whether I must or must not do it.

D78 – Something external must happen for me to have the motivation to lose weight.

D79 – My experience of up and down feelings allows me to not take control of my eating habits.

D84 – When I am over stressed at work and home I feel powerless to make my own decisions about healthy food choices and rather often overeat.

Theme 11: Overeating in action

D8 – When my husband's voice demands that I must eat less than him, I eat anyway, because I think "who are you, I will eat anyway."

D53 – I often feel that I stand alone with all my problems and this gives me a reason to overeat.

D82 – I overeat in times where my husband and I experience difficulties in our sexual relationship.

D85 – When I feel pressurised by the restrictions diets place on me, I break away and overeat.

D88 – I overeat away my problems.

D92 – After overeating negative self-talk triggers me into overeating again.

D93 – The type of food in terms of its taste triggers my overeating.

Theme 12: Communication in action

D6 – I think that I cannot communicate my sexual needs and sexual experiences that give me pleasure, because women are seen by men as sex objects.

D13 – Communicating with my husband is like a scale that goes up the one way and down the other way, therefore I wonder if it is worth even to try communicating with him.

D14 – I withdraw and submit to my husband thereby keeping the peace in conflict situations.

D18 – I am someone that wants to hear my husband say that he believes I can lose weight, but I experience that he doesn't believe I can.

D29 – I believe it is better to be the least when there is conflict.

Theme 13: Blaming in action

D54 – I overeat and blame myself, because nobody listens to what I need or see me for who I am.

Theme 14: In relationship to stressful situations

D52 – In the context of stress I sit in front of the TV and overeat so that I will feel better about myself.

D81 – When I am under a lot of stress and feel I have a lot of problems I tend to overeat to try to instantly feel better about myself.

D83 – I overeat when I am stressed out by my children’s misbehaviour and I want to escape it and comfort myself with food.

Theme 15: In relationship to traumatic experiences

No relevant discourses.

Theme 16: Familial themes and voices

D28 – We have a family routine to eat in front of the TV so that we could escape from our daily stress and life.

D35 – I believe my mother-in-law when she says that we both need to lose weight before our husbands get other wives.

D55 – I am the peacemaker in our family where I am always the one that places others needs above my own.

D61 – Health risks in my family of origin include; high blood pressure, cholesterol and heart attacks.

Theme 17: Socio-cultural power and voices

D24 – Other’s think that thin people have control over their lifestyle and eating habits, which makes them more acceptable and successful in the workplace.

D37 – Thin people think that overweight people must be ashamed of themselves and are not supposed to talk about their experiences with regards to their relationship with food in excess, because they are fat.

D39 – I experience group pressure from other overweight women to be fat with them, “so that we won’t be alone”.

D86 – When women become pregnant they should eat for two.

D96 – At social gatherings I want the freedom to eat fatty and unhealthy foods and not to restrict myself with unhealthy foods and thereby feel punished.

D97 – People say that we always eat with our eyes so if the food table looks pretty and full of unhealthy food, we tend to overeat.

Theme 18: Living with an overweight identity

D59 – Impatience during weight-loss discourages me so that I give up easily in trying to lose weight.

D60 – Overweight with the accompanying health risks is part of my family of origin's history with diets, overeating and exercise patterns.

D62 – Diets and diet pills promise to give you better control over your eating habits.

D63 – I do not diet, because life is too short to live everyday according to rules and regulations with regards to food restriction.

D64 – Only after I gained 40 kg I started worrying about my weight.

D66 – My overweight is not so unacceptable in comparison to other people's overweight and therefore I just have to lose a few kilograms to feel better about myself.

D69 – My genetic make up excuses me to stay overweight.

D73 – I believe I am a happy overweight person and this stops me from losing weight.

4 - Fourth participant

Theme 1: In relationship to anger and frustration

D4 – I am angry towards others with regards to their unrealistic judgements toward me just because I am fat.

D14 – Thin people anger me when they make a big deal about a few extra kilograms in the light of my overweight in extreme.

D20 – I am angry that society does not acknowledge the fact that even though I am overweight, I am more acceptable than other people that have abnormal eating habits. Thus, bingeing is the better of the two.

D25 – I am angry with society's attention upon me because of my physical visibility, therefore I want to divert their attention away from me.

D59 – The all or nothing thinking with regards to diets makes me angry.

D65 – I am angry to be labelled as a person with a fuller figure thus implying that I am in the fat category.

Theme 2: In relationship to fear, loneliness and rejection

D71 – I am often jealous when another overweight person loses a lot of weight, therefore “leaving me behind”, leaving me with a feeling of being alone and a feeling of anger towards them in the questions “how could you leave me alone, what is wrong with me?”

Theme 3: In relationship to love / hate and comfort

D31 – My need to be acknowledged as a good enough daughter for my mother in the role of the caregiver in my family of origin, gave me full licence to nurture myself with food.

D35 – I please others and take care of them so that they will acknowledge me as a good enough person.

D72 – I love food.

D73 – Food is one of my greatest friends.

D74 – Food has so many nuances.

D75 – Food has so many possibilities.

D76 – Food helps me to entertain and to share and to take care of others.

D77 – Food helps me to do something special for someone else.

D78 – I use food in my life and in my relationships because I love food and food is pretty and nice.

D79 – Food is very special to me, it is really like a gift from the Lord that I enjoy very much.

D80 – Food can be compared to perfume which I also love.

D82 – I comfort myself with food.

D94 – In the context of my high work-ethics, I allow myself to nurture and comfort myself with food.

D95 – In the context of the social discourse that all girls must partake in ballet, I did not fit the physical requirements therefore I started nurturing myself with food.

D96 – In the context of growing up in the midst of financial difficulty, I started pitying myself and therefore nurtured myself with food.

D98 – Today I still carry the burden of the pain of my whole family of origin, I still take care of this family and food takes care of me.

D101 – One of the biggest reasons I overeat is “I overeat for my mother”. Therefore I console myself when my mother does not console me or take care of me.

Theme 4: In relationship to sadness and hurt

No relevant discourses.

Theme 5: In relationship to guilt

D1 – Shame and embarrassment affect me in not communicating with my husband about my experience of my overweight body in relation to him, because “I wanted to be dignified at all times”.

D2 – I choose not to wear revealing clothing because I am ashamed of what my husband might think of me in the presence of others when I do so.

Theme 6: In relationship to inferiority

D33 – Other people’s needs are more important than my own.

D45 – There was a time that I felt that I was nothing, whereas I now feel that I am nearly pretty.

Theme 7: In relationship to mistrust

No relevant discourses.

Theme 8: Internalised beliefs

D3 – I prefer not to have sexual intercourse with my husband, because I am fat, which makes it more difficult.

D7 – Although I am rebellious toward the thinking “proper women” in the “proper” sense of the word are supposed to not show or experience their bodies as sensual and attractive, I buy into it.

D9 – I deem myself more privileged than others with regards to me having a high self-image regardless of my attitude to my body image.

D12 – Clothing for thin people is always of a better quality and prettier than for fat people.

D13 – Beautiful people I define primarily as being beautiful within their personality, therefore being comfortable with you and this makes people O.K.

D15 – I don’t understand why I need to lose weight if other people like me just the way I am.

D16 – Others must accept me for who I am and not for how I look.

D17 – Fat people are judged more on their looks than thin people.

D18 – Fat people are judged with negative rather than positive attributes.

D19 – I demand that society sees me for who I am and not for how I look, but on the other hand I am showing society that I do not respect my own body by being overweight.

D21 – I am happy that I don’t have a closet-problem like others thus overweight is an acceptable way of dealing with emotional problems and is not as bad a disorder, in fact everybody does it so therefore I do it.

D22 – A person can rather be unhealthy by overeating than being unhealthy in striving for thinness.

D23 – I am automatically disrespected with regards to my overweight body, because people see the fat first before they see me.

D26 – By being physically visible to others I am saner than thin people who have skeletons in their closets.

D30 – Overweight people don’t have respect for their bodies.

D34 – I must work myself to death to please everyone.

D38 – I continue to buy bigger dress sizes and accept them because I am dignified and have self-respect and will look professional and pretty in bigger sized dresses, because my dignity is more important than to implement a healthy lifestyle.

D39 – My dignity with regards to accepting bigger dress sizes is more important than honesty about my actual overweight.

D42 – My maturity and wisdom with regards to my age is more important to me than my physical appearance.

D43 – I give myself permission to put some weight on each year, because the older a woman is, being fat is more socially acceptable.

D46 – It is better to be a plain and uncomplicated person rather than a highly sophisticated, sexually attractive person.

D49 – I value being a dreamer and passive more than being active and more physically attractive.

D51 – The image of my whole self is that I am a fresh fruit within.

D54 – I am not fat and friendly because I have more depth than just friendliness to share with others.

D55 – Weighing myself on a scale isn't good for me, because this triggers me to try and achieve the perfect body weight.

D61 – Diets are a death sentence.

D62 – In my head I feel that there is a lot of time still to work on my unhealthy eating habits, before cholesterol will be detrimental to my health.

D67 – Passive activities are not only relaxing but also a way for me to be slower and to live slower, therefore it is more important than physical activity.

D70 – Round and bulging fat is not healthy.

D86 – The all or nothing discourse with regards to eating restrictions becomes a punishment either way.

D87 – Restrictions with regards to dieting causes an individual to have an unrealistic, unhealthy, and unnatural relationship with food.

D89 – The all or nothing discourse with regards to overeating is all inclusive therefore restricting your health, your lust for life, your quality of life, because I am not healthy.

D91 – There is not enough incentive for me to have a healthy lifestyle, even though I suffer from cholesterol, because the price to pay in terms of delicious food is too high.

D104 – Overeating is a behavioural pattern, which can be altered into a healthier behavioural pattern, but I unfortunately have a nose and a tongue for food for smelling and eating.

D106 – I am dependant on food just like an alcoholic is dependant on alcohol.

Theme 9: Body perceptions

D5 – “My self-image is more important than my body image” and therefore I have the right to cover my body with big dress sizes.

D40 – I want to hide my overweight body because it is not pretty for me.

D41 – I do not face my overweight body image because regardless of what the media and society expect of me in terms of how I must look, I accept my inner self but I still reject my overweight body image.

D50 – On a self-image level I associate myself more with a kiwi-fruit or a strawberry but on a body-image level I associate myself more with a creampuff.

D64 – The perfect, unscarred physical appearance defines whether you are regarded as beautiful or not, therefore overweight people are not beautiful.

D69 – I experience a more negative image of myself when I am fat.

Theme 10: Voices of control

No relevant discourses.

Theme 11: Overeating in action

D53 – It is in my personality make-up to leave an idea/venture/task if I cannot do it perfectly, therefore if I am not 5000% committed to a healthy diet, I just let go of it and then start bingeing.

D63 – In the light of my belief that there is still a lot of time for me to work on my unhealthy eating habits, I do not start losing weight and keep on overeating.

D83 – I don't like diet-food therefore I overeat.

D84 – I overeat in times of my anger-reaction to restrictions on my food intake.

D85 – As soon as I overeat once during a period of dieting, it triggers me into a cycle of overeating because I give in to the notion that I trespassed the staunch restrictions.

D88 – The all or nothing discourse with regards to dieting triggers binge eating, as if you unconsciously prepare yourself for it to happen.

D90 – If I do not follow a specific diet to the letter, it triggers me to leave the diet and overeat, therefore definitely being a winning recipe for failure.

D92 – Passivity triggers overeating.

D97 – I use overeating as an escape for day to day stresses, “it is as if I escaped into a fantasy world whenever everything got too much”, and therefore I have been eating secretly since my childhood.

D100 – When self-pity visits me I overeat.

D102 – When I am especially angry with my mother, it is my normal pattern to overeat.

D103 – Frustration and anxiety tricks me into overeating.

Theme 12: Communication in action

D24 – Talking about my overweight body makes others uncomfortable because it's supposed to be a taboo subject.

D32 – I often felt misunderstood and unheard by my parents and others.

D36 – I demand that others must sort things out through talking and if this does not happen, I am angry and therefore overeat.

D52 – I demand to be heard that there is a thin person within me waiting to come out.

Theme 13: Blaming in action

D99 – Taking care of my family of origin angers me and gives me the right to blame them and after that myself, which triggers binge eating, after which the eating cycle continues with no time limit.

Theme 14: In relationship to stressful situations

D93 – I use a quick fix by overeating in times of tiredness and stress, thereby experiencing a short-lived energy spurt.

Theme 15: In relationship to traumatic experiences

No relevant discourses.

Theme 16: Familial themes and voices

D6 – My mother taught me to dress properly and dignified at all times even though I stop myself experiencing my body in a physical sense.

D27 – My mother modelled overeating behaviour as a comfort in times of stress and work pressure.

D28 – I have decided to nurture myself with food just like my mother nurtured herself with food and this is O.K.

D56 – My mother and I often dieted together while I was growing up, where there were definite times when we restricted ourselves from certain foods.

D57 – I have learnt to have love for food from my mom.

Theme 17: Socio-cultural power and voices

D8 – I think that society thinks that “If you are fat, you are not supposed to wear revealing clothing”.

D10 – Media portrays a “thin is beautiful” message and this influences overweight people to dissociate with or have negative feelings about their body image.

D11 – Society rejects fat people with regards to providing ugly, bigger sized clothing.

D37 – Other’s think that thin people are successful, therefore fat people are failures.

D60 – All female teenagers through all centuries can tell stories about diets and their unhealthy effects on you as an individual and others around you, where you lose a little bit of weight in a week’s time and then the following week you binge again.

Theme 18: Living with an overweight identity

D29 – In the context of my overweight body and bodily cells becoming ill, I recognise the fact that other overweight friends are becoming sick just like me, if we continue overeating.

D44 – Since childhood I have been less intent on caring for my physical appearance than other children.

D47 – Since my childhood physical activity has been unfamiliar to me and therefore unwanted.

D48 – Since my childhood I have become set in my unhealthy eating and exercise patterns, therefore I will always be fat.

D58 – My high cholesterol problem does not trigger me to eat healthier because diets do not guarantee a healthy lifestyle.

D66 – Since childhood I have preferred to be passive with regards to physical activities, I will rather read or sit and think about things which are less active in nature than exercise.

D68 – Since childhood I experienced that my overweight stood in the way of boys liking me and this made me feel as if I was nothing therefore I did not take care of my physical appearance.

D81 – Restricting my food-intake during certain periods of my life was terrible because I just wanted to overeat afterwards.

5 - Fifth participant

Theme 1: In relationship to anger and frustration

D2 – It angers me when my husband doesn't consider me, my feelings, thoughts and needs.

D3 – It angers me when my husband doesn't listen to my feelings and thoughts and in so doing he does not understand me.

D17 – In the context of my younger brother being an alcoholic it angers me when I allow him to sit passively and misuse me with regards to financial support.

D18 – It angers me when others don't reciprocate my never-ending love and devotion to them, therefore believing that they can't do it as well as I can.

D27 – It angers me when I allow myself to waste my energy on guilt feelings.

D37 – In the context of the death of my mother "just forget and accept that your loved one has passed away and move on" angers me so that I want to escape the painful experience by overeating.

Theme 2: In relationship to fear, loneliness and rejection

D36 – I fear to be alone in the context of the loss of my mother, because who will worry about me, who will love me?

D40 – In the context of me being left behind as the youngest in my family of origin after my mother passed away, I feel alone and I feel less privileged than my brothers and sisters.

D43 – It is difficult to separate myself being and doing like my mother since my mother past away, because this will make me feel lonely.

Theme 3: In relationship to love / hate and comfort

D6 – When I prepare the same food my mother did in the same way, I am comforting myself and others by recalling her presence and touch with food at family gatherings when my mother was still alive.

D7 – Preparing food like my mother did, makes me feel that something of her person has stayed behind with me as if I am still reaching out to be touched and comforted by her.

D20 – I hate it when others are dishonest with me about how I look.

D21 – I hate it when my brother has unrealistic expectations of me without him knowing what's happening in my life. This makes me feel that what I'm doing is not good enough and that I am not good enough.

D31 – I was not comforted by my family after losing my mother because nothing can comfort you after such a loss.

D58 – Since my childhood I have been comforted with food by others.

D71 – An entrepreneurial lifestyle forces me to have to do something, to have to perform and I think this has an influence on me comforting myself with food.

D79 – Food as my comforter tells the lie of “just one more piece of bread, don't worry it won't make you fat. Just keep on eating; you can't actually make a difference to your physical size”.

Theme 4: In relationship to sadness and hurt

D42 – I am sad because I never shared my emotions with my mother and she did not teach me how to handle my emotions.

Theme 5: In relationship to guilt

D9 – I feel guilty that I was not a good enough daughter for my mother. I therefore feel it is my right to reprimand others when they don't treat their parents in a correct way.

D26 – I feel guilty when I consider myself, my children and husband's needs less important than others.

D59 – I think that my mother felt very guilty because I was her last born and the only one left at home and she felt that she owed me something, therefore I was very spoiled, mostly with food. Now I feel guilty eating too much.

D67 – Guilt feelings about considering others more important than me and my family leads to me being emotional without knowing why I am emotional and then I overeat.

Theme 6: In relationship to inferiority

D1 – When I feel taken for granted by my husband, I tend to do too much for other people, while neglecting my husbands' needs and him expecting of me to be there exclusively for him.

D12 – Others' needs are more important than my own.

D15 – I am a very soft person and others easily take advantage of me.

D24 – It is difficult to say no to others even to the detriment of myself and my family.

D35 – I will keep my employees, even though times are financially tough, because others' financial needs are more important than my own.

Theme 7: In relationship to mistrust

No relevant discourses.

Theme 8: Internalised beliefs

D10 – Others don't understand my emotional experience with regards to the loss of my mother.

D11 – It is important to me what others think about me.

D13 – I take care of others, but nobody will look after me like I can do for them.

D14 - I help other people with all my heart without thinking what the consequences will be.

D16 – I easily feel sorry for others and in so doing help them because I want to make it easier for them in life. But I think that sometimes this is the wrong thing to do because people need to help themselves to be strong, but I do it anyway.

D22 – It is important to have a soft nature even though others misuse me.

D23 – If my mother was still alive everything would have been perfect but now it is my fate to be like my mother.

D32 – I need to help other people so that I can feel better about myself.

D33 – I help people as far as I can, but if I can't help them anymore, then it is a very bad experience for me.

D34 – Just like my brother being an alcoholic and dependant on alcohol to comfort him, I am an overeater to comfort myself with food. Thus I will always be an overeater.

D39 – My mother was supposed to warn me not to overeat because it is not good for me, but she did not do that.

D44 – It is more important to help others and be there for others rather than for my family and for myself.

D45 – I could lose something if I cannot help someone fully but only to a certain point, when I am not continuously involved in their lives.

D47 – Financial security gives me a sense of self-worth.

D56 – The voice of my emotions and thoughts is more important than my physical body.

D61 – Overeating is not such a big psychological problem and need not be talked about.

D68 – It is better to overeat than to misuse alcohol because all that happens to me is that I grow fat with no detriment to others.

D75 – I think that an alcoholic and an overeater have the same reason for their "problem". Food or alcohol gives persons courage again to go on in uncertain times or during painful experiences.

Theme 9: Body perceptions

D49 – I think I am ugly, because I am fat.

D57 – I have always thought that I must close my body with clothes and that I must hide it from the world.

Theme 10: Voices of control

D30 – I feel powerless in the presence of my family of origin's tears and crying because I cannot comfort them, and more so, I don't know how to comfort myself.

D83 – I feel powerless in the face of food being my comforter.

Theme 11: Overeating in action

D63 – I overeat so that my father, mother and siblings will feel that they provided me with comfort through food.

D64 – I allow myself to overeat in reaction to the loss of my mother.

D65 – It triggers me to overeat after my siblings leave family gatherings where I feel left with pain when they say they love me and I am just like my mother.

D66 – I overeat when my siblings demand from me to prepare food like our mother used to, because I don't want to be their mother and also miss her.

D69 – I overeat to escape my painful experiences rather than to come to terms with it.

D73 – While overeating I don't think what I'm doing.

D74 – In times of overeating I think of how nice the food is, at least the food is nice, something that I can hold onto.

D76 – Overeating allows me to escape for a moment and then to go on in the midst of difficult or painful experiences.

D78 – During times of menstruation I tend to overeat more.

D80 – As soon as I am challenged to go and sit down and plan how to eat healthier, it triggers me to overeat even more.

D81 – I overeat because all the nice times that I spent with my mother were in the kitchen busy preparing food or around the table.

Theme 12: Communication in action

No relevant discourses.

Theme 13: Blaming in action

D19 – When helping others I blame them for making me feel guilty when I don't help them.

D48 – I blame myself for indulging in food and then realising that I am fat and feeling bad about myself.

Theme 14: In relationship to stressful situations

D62 – Unhealthy food is an important crutch in stressful times.

D70 – Tension and stress with regards to finances pressurises me into a corner and forces me to overeat and in so doing escaping my fear of failure in business.

D72 – Financial uncertainty makes me very emotional, especially at the end of the month, thereby leading to a two-week binge-eating spree.

D77 – Stressful times give me a reason to pick up a lot of weight.

Theme 15: In relationship to traumatic experiences

D25 – The loss of my mother was a painful experience which I tried to numb by comforting myself with food.

D46 – After the death of my mother I started to live in the shadow of my mother, meaning to strive to be like her and in the process losing myself.

Theme 16: Familial themes and voices

D4 – In the context of my mother passing away when I was thirteen years old, my family of origin wanted to lessen their guilt feelings about me losing my mother at such a young age and then tried to comfort me with food.

D5 – I try to fulfil my mother's role in my family of origin, by preparing the same food as my mother did in the same way that she did, without straying from her way of doing things when my family comes to visit.

D8 – I spoil my children and myself with food because children must be spoiled by a grandmother whose place I have taken.

D28 – I dislike family gatherings because it allows for my family of origin to reminisce about the good times when my mother and father were still alive and this leads to me being very emotional, guilty and angry for not having a mother and father anymore.

D29 – I don't like it when my brothers and sisters still cry about the death of my mother and father because it does not help me or them to come to terms with it.

D38 – When I am pregnant I can overeat and become fat and this is ok because I am a mother.

D50 – I have become like my mother and this makes me feel close to her.

D51 – I, like my mother, like to surprise people, to do something special for someone else and never for myself.

D52 – I, like my mother, always have a solution for problems, I love my husband and I work very hard and will sacrifice everything I have for others.

D53 – I, like my mother, don't take care of myself just so that everybody around me will be happy.

D54 – I, like my mother, love the Lord and will do everything for the church.

D55 – I, like my mother, make sure that my family of origin come together and experience everything as it was in the past.

Theme 17: Socio-cultural power and voices

D41 – Society believes that fat people are to be blamed because they are fat.

Theme 18: Living with an overweight identity

D60 – I started to become overweight only after the birth of my first child and I link this to me missing my mother during this time.

R - Researcher-participant

Theme 1: In relationship to anger and frustration

D3 - Anger visits me when society expects that weight-loss is the only success story for obese women in their relationship with food in excess.

Theme 2: In relationship to fear, loneliness and rejection

D5 – I overeat because of my own “fear of failure” or the “fear that I may not be good enough” as a doctoral student.

Theme 3: In relationship to love / hate and comfort

D1 – I could not hate food, because whenever times are tough or easy I tend to nurture myself with food.

D2 - Food calms me down and comforts me like when I was a new born infant drinking my bottle in my mother’s arms.

D4 – I overeat because of emotional reasons, I want to comfort myself with food.

D14 - In the unveiling of my food story I realise daily the love – hate relationship I have with food, as if my emotions of “sadness”, “anger”, “fear of rejection” are like monsters constantly needing to be fed by food – junk food – sweets and fatty foods!!!

D27 - Overeating was a very safe place and loving place for me for many years.

Theme 4: In relationship to sadness and hurt

D9 - I am wondering about the “hurt feelings” or “emotions” involved as the cause and sometimes in my case the outcome of this “tornado” experience.

D10 - Is it the “tornado” or the hurt feelings or emotions that paralyse me? I would say that in my case it is both – like a vicious circle!

Theme 5: In relationship to guilt

D42 – When I am thin and attractive, guilt tells me that I am a wonton sex goddess and this makes me a bad, bad girl.

Theme 6: In relationship to inferiority

No relevant discourses.

Theme 7: In relationship to mistrust

D32 - My taking responsibility for my relationship with food got stuck in mistrust in myself that I would stay forever at the point of a see-saw with my weight.

Theme 8: Internalised beliefs

D11 - “How I look is more important as to who I am”.

D12 – In the context of one client’s discourse: Client agrees with others that she cannot do something and she listens to “being spiteful” when she does not prove others wrong. My discourse: I like to prove others wrong if they judge me about something.

D13 – I don’t just accept positive feedback all the time

D17 - What others think of me and their perception of my ability to lose weight were so often so important that this skewed my reasons for losing weight.

D18 – Reason for losing weight: “I’ll show my mother and father I can lose a lot of weight, just because they simply don’t believe I can do it.”

D19 - Reason for losing weight: “I’ll lose weight so that I can look good in my clothes and make other women jealous and make men desire me.”

D20 - Reason for losing weight: “I’ll lose weight so that I would look good in a certain dress for a certain occasion.”

D21 - Reason for losing weight: “I’ll lose weight for my husband, because I live in fear of him leaving me or looking at other women and I want his attention.”

D22 - Reason for losing weight: “I’ll lose weight so that I can win a competition between girl friends.”

D23 - Reason for losing weight: “I’ll lose weight so that my son won’t be shy of me at school.”

D25 - I know and have experienced in the past how easily the “all or nothing” discourse can keep me from losing weight in a healthy way and it could force me or push me to obsess about losing weight so that I lose perspective on why I started to lose weight in the first place.

D26 – Beauty is the way we share caring attitudes and things with others.

D29 - Being hard on myself and not taking time out can have the outcome of quick fixes disguised as substitutes for my “overeating being the comforter” like “going on a spending spree for new clothes” or “eating out and making wrong food choices and then punishing myself with strict diets and an overload of digestive pills”.

D30 – I relate the quick fix as the answer to my pain or anger, but translate it to myself as “I am feeling better about myself, because “I look good in these clothes” or “when I punish myself with dietary foods, I may have nice food now and then”.

D31 - During the past 18 to 20 years quick fixes for my pain and hurt and anger have been just as detrimental as the “overeating of food”. As a matter of fact I think the quick fixes were part of the trap to sort of excuse my “overeating habits” as permissible and good for me.

D34 - Working with my discourse of “proving others wrong if they say I cannot do something”. The first thing that comes to my mind is that this discourse is somehow linked to the need I have to be recognised by others and even to be complimented by other people as “I am a good person” and that “I deserve to be treated as someone that can do things and are good at tasks”. I am thinking of the discourse “I must always be the role model in all situations”.

D39 - The “poor, poorer and poorest me”, “ag shame, look how terrible everything and everyone is to me” and “I am the victim and everyone must know that I am the victim and this makes me holier than others”; are all discourses when I look at my relationship with “self-pity”.

D44 - I will be better than boys or men at being holy.

Theme 9: Body perceptions

No relevant discourses.

Theme 10: Voices of control

No relevant discourses.

Theme 11: Overeating in action

D8 - I can identify with the experience of the “tornado” where “binge eating” has paralysed me to a stand still, where I could just space out and not take responsibility for what I am feeling.

D15 - I overeat sometimes so that I can protect myself from others’ negative onslaughts and this makes me more holy than others, because I do not act out my anger towards them but towards my own body. This leads to a point where “overeating” numbs me in such a way that I choose to not let myself be heard. Therefore rather than blaming others, I start listening to self-pity and then I need comfort by overeating...

Theme 12: Communication in action

D7 – There is a right time to talk about women’s relationships with food.

D33 - One thing that stood out from my whole reflective story was that I had a deep need, even as a 16 year old to express my relationship with my body. This is after the incident where I sat on my father’s lap at 14 years of age and then the mind – body split happened and eating food in excess became my protection against unwanted attention from my father, other men and from myself. My main purpose in life started to be “to protect my holiness” and this resulted in my body becoming mute for nearly 18 years now.

D41 - “I am going to eat myself to the death, because you do not listen to me”.

Theme 13: Blaming in action

D24 – I blame others and myself for my overweight and excessive eating habits.

D38 - The “unwanted attention from men” is part of my blaming game towards the male gender for declaring as a male dominated society to me at the age of twelve that males are better or more superior to females. I then decided that I could start blaming men for looking at my body as being desirable. In my mind this made men “unholy” and I was allowed to overeat to keep myself being the “holy one”, thus the superior gender.

D40 - I have allowed “self-pity” to put me down as the victim in relationship with my husband and this has lead to me blaming others and in so doing taking over the persecutor role.

Theme 14: In relationship to stressful situations

D6 - I ate more and had a few binge eating sessions during the time I compiled my D-proposal, which allows me to make the link that binge eating is a form of comfort in times of stress. Naming the discourse that “binge eating is a form of comfort in times of stress” revealed to me how I allowed myself to emotionally overeat.

Theme 15: In relationship to traumatic experiences

No relevant discourses.

Theme 16: Familial themes and voices

D16 - “Sexuality” has been a “taboo subject” from way back in my larger family circle. In an era in which my grandparents and parents grew up, “sexuality” was a “taboo subject” to many people they associated with.

D28 – Like one of my clients, I also “eat for my mother”.

D35 - I learnt from my mother’s voice that I must always be good and “proving” to her always that I will be a good little girl and sister towards my brother even if I do not want to do this with all my heart, because of hurt feelings towards my brother. So I justified this self-abuse by overeating and pacifying my anger and comforting my hurt feelings.

D36 - My discourse – “not just accepting positive feedback all the time” is a voice of my father (my ever optimistic and positive and trusting father) that sometimes was cheated by other people and felt hurt and disappointed, but then quoted how positive and optimistic he is as to his saying “Always look at the bright side of life!”

D37 – For many years I believed that “my family cannot live with out me”. I must rescue them and comfort them.

Theme 17: Socio-cultural power and voices

D43 - I was told by society that men were better at everything and I hated it with a passion.

Theme 18: Living with an overweight identity

No relevant discourses.

Alternative stories (A) according to themes

1 - First participant

Theme 1: In relationship to self-worth, self-love and love from others

A10 – When I turn self-hate into self-love I feel nurtured.

A11 – Self-love and acceptance helps me to explore alternative ways of comforting myself.

A14 – When other people compliment my handy work, I feel better about myself and I feel worthwhile.

A22 – A horse from my childhood was a great comfort to me and he made me feel safe.

A36 – I am very proud of myself.

A50 – It means a lot to me that my child, dolls, friend, horse and sometimes my husband love me.

A60 – I have learnt that I have a deep need to be loved by myself and others, but that it starts with self-love.

Theme 2: Learning experience and externalised decision

A33 – My good judgement tells me that the tornado is a really big problem and I am busy thinking about different possibilities in dealing with this tornado rather than just sitting and worrying about it.

A37 – I have decided to think twice before I act impulsively and to be calm in relationship to my husband and the tornado.

A41 – Talking about painful experiences can be like an open wound.

A42 – If I look after myself on different levels everything will fall into place.

A43 – I am learning that I have a perception of other people's perception of me, so I can choose to believe differently than negatively about myself.

A46 – I have learnt that I have a relationship with the tornado and that I can overcome it.

A48 – I have learnt that my childhood friend, a horse meant a lot to me and he helped through my painful experiences by comforting me. This means that I was not alone.

A52 – I hope that after these conversations that our family and I will have hope and happiness.

A55 – It is not important anymore to try and please others the whole time, thus my opinion is important.

A57 – I think I have become more mature and have taken responsibility for my actions.

A59 – I have learnt that I still have a fear for my husband's drinking problem.

Theme 3: Constructive communication in action

A12 – After talking about my overeating process, I feel more in control, because when I feel the need to overeat I find something else (creative arts) to do.

A15 – I protect myself from negative feedback by not telling other people that I have done a specific creative product, thus I feel safe.

A16 – I am used to being praised for my creative abilities.

A19 – Talking about my feelings and thoughts helps me to stand up against the tornado.

A21 – Talking about my creative abilities rekindles my passion to create.

A39 – It is good to talk to or about my inner child and to be reconciled to her.

A40 – To talk about painful experiences can be healing.

A44 – These conversations have helped me to be more patient in my relationship with my husband, we also communicate more.

A45 – If I think twice about what to say or not to say to my husband, we communicate better and understand each other more.

A51 – By talking about my relationship with the tornado I could find myself again.

A53 – These conversations have helped me to allow my voice and opinions to be heard.

A54 – These conversations have helped me to stop running away from my problems and not to hide away anymore, but to face myself and others.

A58 – It has been helpful to talk about my painful experiences, although I was afraid to do so in the beginning.

Theme 4: Participating in creative arts and handiwork

A1 – When I am creative in painting and needlework it helps me to deal with the tornado experience and it makes me feel that if I am productive I can cope.

A2 – When I am creative I don't experience the chaos caused by the tornado.

A3 – Creative arts helps me to calm down and be peaceful.

A4 – Working with my hands gives me a sense of joy.

A5 – Creative arts have helped me through painful experiences since my childhood.

A6 – Talking about the helpfulness of creative arts in being more in control of my life makes the tornado smaller.

A7 – Creative arts help me to be more in control of my eating habits.

A9 – It makes me feel better about myself if I can busy myself with creative things and thereby express myself.

A13 – To do something physically with my hands helps to stop the tornado.

A17 – Creative expression through needlework and painting is a safe, nurturing, relaxing and special place where I can express my thoughts and feelings.

A18 – My creative expression results in me feeling as if I can take on the world and I feel that I can accomplish many things.

A47 – I can allow myself to be like a child sometimes in the context of creative arts and in relationships where I have fun more often.

A49 – Creative arts has been an emotional outlet for me during my painful experiences as a child.

Theme 5: Taking initiative in business

A20 – I have plans to market my art works and to start my own business because I believe in my handiwork.

A23 – Running my own business gives me a feeling of being in control.

A24 – In business I dislike being dependant on others.

A25 – In business, do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

A26 – Aesthetic value is important in business.

A27 – It is important to take care of yourself and others in business.

A28 – To persevere in business is sometimes the only option.

A29 – Having faith in God is a nessasary asset with regards to success in business.

A30 – It is important to treat people with respect in business.

A31 – It is important to keep employees happy in business, and then I will receive happiness or good will comes back from the employees.

A32 – Loyalty and good judgement are very important in business.

A38 – In business I am strong and I am not allowed to be weak and I just have to cope there is no other alternative.

Theme 6: Personal abilities in action

Not applicable.

Theme 7: Story before marriage when I was fit and thin

Not applicable.

Theme 8: Participating in alternative ways of taking care of myself

Not applicable.

Theme 9: Prospective healthy lifestyle

A8 – If I am in control of my eating habits, it means that I am coping better with stress.

A34 – I am now pregnant with my second child and have the desire unlike my first pregnancy to eat healthy and look after myself.

A56 – I feel some freedom from my struggles with food and I believe that I have the choice in what I eat and when I eat it and in which context.

A61 – I want to have a healthy lifestyle, not only for my benefit but also for my children. This is my reason for losing weight in the long run.

Theme 10: Prospect of taking care of physical appearance

A35 – I am now motivated to take care of myself and to look pretty and to make new clothes, because I want to take care of my physical appearance.

2 - Second participant

Theme 1: In relationship to self-worth, self-love and love from others

A12 – The belief in myself that I am worthy allows me to prove to others that I can live a healthy lifestyle.

A22 – Self-forgiveness and self-acceptance help me to stop blaming others and myself for being fat or overeating.

Theme 2: Learning experience and externalised decision

A1 – Believing in the definition of hope is helpful and gives me hope and openness to others and myself.

A9 – The switch to take control of my life in a healthy way happens when I have an overload of others perceptions that I am fat and then I want to prove them wrong.

A14 – In the context of previous therapeutic conversations before this study I learnt that it is important to not be stuck in the past but to focus on the future by living daily in the here and the now, thus opening new ways of thinking about the importance of taking responsibility for my own health.

A15 – I am remembering how important it is to set goals for myself and to work on my goals, because I cannot change the past for it is the past.

A17 – Perseverance helps me to sort out difficult problems and intellectual and emotional stumbling blocks.

A18 – The belief in myself since childhood that I can accomplish tasks if only I persevere and put my mind to it, gives me courage and hope.

A19 – The belief that crying as a form of expressing your emotions makes you more human and approachable to others.

A26 – As an adult and a mother I have a better understanding and mercy for my mother's pain.

A29 – Being self-aware of my thoughts and feelings and actions with regards to my relationship with food in excess allows me to make meaning from my experiences, thereby getting to know myself better and feeling more in control.

A30 – I am learning that I want to hear myself more often so that I can get perspective with regards to my relationship with food in excess.

A32 – I am learning that to have courage to change my lifestyle to a healthy one means to put the courage into practise by taking responsibility for my exercise and eating habits.

A33 – I am learning that the media and society's opinions with regards to people who are overweight will always be there, but I have the choice to allow it to influence me or not.

A34 – I am learning that there are more stories to describe myself and my experiences than only with regards to my fat story.

Theme 3: Constructive communication in action

A16 – Some of my goals are to start communicating my health needs with my husband again and to join a gym and to actually go.

A20 – I have the courage to talk to my family of origin about past taboo subjects, thus courage is a friend of mine.

A21 – I have initiative to share with my family of origin my experiences of our taboo subjects to the benefit of more intimate relationships amongst family members.

A24 – In the context of my work environment I decide to stand up for myself and to express my opinion.

A25 – In a safe place I can express my emotions of anger.

A28 – I have talked about my relationship with food in excess and this made me grow as a person.

A31 – I am learning that talking about painful experiences with others and my family of origin can be healing not only for myself but also for them, therefore lessening my need to overeat as a safe place to emotionally express myself.

Theme 4: Participating in creative arts and handiwork

Not applicable.

Theme 5: Taking initiative in business

Not applicable.

Theme 6: Personal abilities in action

A3 – My stubbornness made me want to show other people that I can accomplish becoming fit and in so doing feel better about myself.

A4 – I have perseverance when I decide to become fit.

A8 – I have the ability to think creatively and in a different way than usual, thus I am a good problem solver.

A23 – Being more self assertive is helpful in discerning that overeating is not such a safe place.

Theme 7: Story before marriage when I was fit and thin

A6 – Being fit resulted in me feeling better about myself, feeling proud of myself, having a feeling of accomplishment and feeling better physically and spiritually.

A10 – Just before my marriage where I was fit and thin is the context for the following characteristics I know about myself, namely: Perseverance, spitefulness, stubbornness, love for life, belief that I can do it, belief in myself. These characteristics could help me to start again with a healthy lifestyle, because I cannot expect my husband to change. I want to take the responsibility for my own health.

A11 – The main reason why I decided to take control of my life through exercise and eating healthy was the realisation that I can do it and will do it and that it will be good for my health.

A13 – In the context of me leaving home as a young adult I started to take responsibility for my own health and wellbeing, because I developed the need to prove to myself that I can do it by myself thereby rekindling my characteristic of perseverance in finishing a task that I have started in the first place.

A35 - I felt good about myself when I was thin.

Theme 8: Participating in alternative ways of taking care of myself

Not applicable.

Theme 9: Prospective healthy lifestyle

A2 – I feel better about myself when I am physically fit, exercise and eat healthy food.

A5 – Fitness relieves hunger pains and fills an emotional void.

A27 – It is more important to change my eating habits into a healthy lifestyle rather than to just focus on losing my extra weight

Theme 10: Prospect of taking care of physical appearance

A7 – When my physical appearance improved I felt that I showed people the real me, thus being thin and fit makes me want to show myself more often to others.

3 - Third participant

Theme 1: In relationship to self-worth, self-love and love from others

A3 – Self-worth and self-acceptance help me to change my perception of other people's negative perception of me being fat and ugly.

A6 – It is my responsibility to listen to myself and to accept myself.

A9 – I take more time to spend with my husband and children and this helps me to feel more loved and accepted.

A11 – Self-acceptance and others' acceptance of me enables me to feel better about myself and this makes me feel pretty.

A18 - Self-acceptance helps me to deal with negative comments in a more constructive manner, because the comments don't bother me so much anymore.

A21 – My relationship with God has given me a better understanding of His fruit of the Spirit such as; patience, love, self-control, self-confidence; and this helps me to accept and love myself more.

A23 – My relationship with God is of great value in the fact that I believe I love and accept myself in looks and personality.

A25 – My experience of God's grace, mercy and love has made me more thankful for who I am just like I am in the moment.

A36 – Self-acceptance allows me to experience other's acceptance of me on a more regular basis.

A37 – Self-acceptance helps me to accept others just as they are.

A41 – I have the right to allow my voice to be heard because I am worth being listened to with regards to my experiences of my relationship with food in excess.

A42 – When I have self-confidence, self-respect, self-love then I do not worry about what others think about me anymore.

Theme 2: Learning experience and externalised decision

A4 – My changed perception that I am beautiful even though I am fat makes me more approachable to others.

A15 – I don't need anything from other people to make myself feel better about myself, even though I am overweight I can be pretty.

A19 - I have decided that my happiness does not depend on others, only on myself, and this will be my motto in life.

A20 – I don't allow other people's negative opinions of me to oppress me, because I want to be a winner!

A38 – It is more important to lose weight for myself and my health rather than for my husband or my children.

A39 – My happiness and health are the greatest reasons for me to lose weight.

A40 – I am going to make use of spiritual support from God, emotional support from friends and family to lose weight and live a healthy lifestyle, not only for myself, but also for my family.

A45 – I have decided that people must take me or leave me just as I am even if they accept it or not, I am who I am.

A47 – The "I want to lose weight" is a more peaceful way to prepare myself to lose the weight and I am more willing to do it.

A48 – I am deciding to lose weight and therefore I will do it on my own time, but I will do it without punishing myself.

A49 – I am learning that there is a flipside to the comforting function overeating has in the long run, because the bad pattern brings sadness and fat.

A50 – I am learning that all the perceptions I have of others' negative perceptions of me are all in my mind and therefore I can change my perception at any given moment.

A51 – I am learning that to be healthy is one of the main reasons to lose weight.

A52 – I am learning that my inner strength comes directly from my spiritual relationship with God.

A53 – I am learning that emotional support from others is helpful in me realising my accomplishment in self-acceptance in my relationship with food in excess.

A54 – I am learning that even though I am married and have children, I am responsible to take care of myself.

A58 – I am learning that when I change my motive from must to want to lose weight, I am more in control and I am choosing then to lose the weight.

A59 – I am learning that I am not totally where I want to be with regards to my weight, I would like to lose some weight but I have made peace with myself.

Theme 3: Constructive communication in action

A1 – In the context of previous therapeutic relationship with the researcher-therapist I have learnt how to love myself, to accept myself, to accept and forgive people that I love, to talk to significant others about my problems; thereby giving expression to my emotions.

A2 – My decision in the context of the previous therapeutic relationship with the researcher-therapist was to take control of my feelings of depression and to stand up against the feelings of powerlessness and to open myself up again just to be me in a unique way.

A8 – Open communication between my husband and I concerning sex and emotions is helpful to strengthen our intimacy.

A10 – I feel prettier as a woman when I communicate my feelings and thoughts with my husband.

A12 – My husband and I standing together in our discipline towards our children is helpful for me to feel a better mother and motivates me to look after my physical appearance better and to take care of my health. This has a positive effect on my children as well.

A16 – To think and hear that I have lost weight makes me feel good about myself.

A24 - My communication with people and God whom I trust about my relationship with food in excess is helpful.

A30 – I have decided to communicate my needs even if it means to not keep the peace so that they could carry the burdens with me.

A31 – It is important that we sit around the table and eat our dinner together as a family and use the time to communicate about our day.

A44 – Others' positive remarks about how I look also gives me inner strength.

A55 – Talking about my experiences of my relationship with food in excess opens up space for other overweight people to disclose their experiences, therefore resulting in the feeling of belonging somewhere.

A56 – When I allow my voice to be heard surrounding my experiences with my relationship with food in excess, it brings hope to others with similar experiences but that have not yet let their voices be heard on this matter.

A57 – It is important to continue to talk about my experiences of my relationship with food in excess, so that I will reach a healthy lifestyle.

Theme 4: Participating in creative arts and handiwork

Not applicable.

Theme 5: Taking initiative in business

Not applicable.

Theme 6: Personal abilities in action

A5 – Believing in myself helps me to be self-confident and visa versa.

A7 – Inner strength helps me to listen and nurture my emotional needs without using food as a comfort.

A13 – Inner strength comprises happiness, love, patience and new perspectives on life.

A14 – Inner strength gives me a new perspective like even though I am fat I am still a beautiful person.

A22 – My faith in God helps me to understand that although I have contributed to having an overweight body, God is my creator, I am His child and He accepts me for who I am, therefore I do not have the right to not accept myself and neither do others.

A43 – My inner strength helps me to allow my voice to be heard, because I am a person in my own right.

Theme 7: Story before marriage when I was fit and thin

Not applicable.

Theme 8: Participating in alternative ways of taking care of myself

Not applicable.

Theme 9: Prospective healthy lifestyle

A17 – I don't want to be round and fat, because it does not make me happy to be overweight and unhealthy and I want to be healthy therefore I want to lose weight.

A26 – I could gain health, feel better about myself, fit into my clothes and have more lust for life; from losing weight

A27 – I could lose my bad habits such as the habit of overeating all day, being unfit; from losing weight.

A28 – I could gain a sense of self control and it helps me to be a better and healthier person, from losing weight.

A29 – When I set the goal to eat healthy on a daily basis I feel powerful and in control of my eating habits and this result in to me saying, “Yes, I can if I want to.”

A32 – It is important to eat less and healthy. Healthy eating means to cut out sugar, and to eat more vegetables.

A33 – Knowledge about health risks with regards to overweight helps me to realise that overweight could be very dangerous and therefore I am going for a full medical check-up.

A34 – I am responsible for myself and my family to set a pattern in our household of a healthy lifestyle.

A35 – I am taking responsibility to break the unhealthy habits chain in my family by taking care of what, how much and when my family and I eat certain foods and to replace very unhealthy foods with healthier but nice alternatives.

A39 – My happiness and health are the greatest reasons for me to lose weight.

A46 – I choose to eat healthy and not to punish myself with must lose weight by changing my thoughts to I want to lose weight.

Theme 10: Prospect of taking care of physical appearance

Not applicable.

4 - Fourth participant

Theme 1: In relationship to self-worth, self-love and love from others

A6 – Self-acceptance of myself and body image helps me to take responsibility for a healthy lifestyle.

A14 – I accept myself when I am professionally dressed and take care of my physical appearance, even though I am overweight.

Theme 2: Learning experience and externalised decision

A1 – To have a healthy lifestyle is the crux of combating overweight.

A2 – A few years ago I made a calculated decision that I will never ever pay someone again to help me to become thin, because quick-fixes and other solutions are not the answer to a healthy lifestyle, because the answer to a healthy lifestyle is within me.

A3 – Since a few years ago I do not settle for the all or nothing discourse rather the all and nothing. The all implies the overeating and/or to stick to your diet no matter what. The nothing implies to never diet again and/or to decide to never follow a diet again. Thinking in this way, where I decided that I am just going to accept myself, has not worked because since the decision I have

picked up even more weight. To change my overweight condition to a more healthy weight, I need to make a lifestyle change; therefore something that really works for me on all sides is to take responsibility for my healthy eating habits as good as possible. On the nothing side is to be free of restrictions of society-driven diets.

A4 – Others' unhealthy relationships with food gives me a wake-up call with regards to how necessary it is to take responsibility for a definitive lifestyle change to health and well-being.

A7 – I don't need to lose weight because by dressing myself professionally I like how I look.

A12 – I have the knowledge and the responsibility to take charge of my unhealthy eating patterns because I will then be less depressed and more relaxed and have quality of life.

A16 – I equate fat to being unhealthy, therefore a total health image is more important than physical beauty.

A17 – In the context of believing that I have freedom of choice in anything I think, feel or do, I feel happier if I choose a healthy lifestyle.

A24 – I have decided to take responsibility for my weight problem and not to make my mother the scapegoat, because I recognise the fact that my mother has control over her eating habits, therefore the buck stops here.

A25 – I have the choice to eat or not to eat healthy foods.

A26 – I have decided to go to a dietician and to be committed to lose weight for health reasons and for health reasons only.

A29 – Limited options in larger dress sizes brings the reality to me that I need to lose weight, but more so, overweight is unhealthy and I don't want to be unhealthy and this is the right time to lose weight.

A30 – I am very motivated to lose weight after hearing and experiencing various success stories with regards to overweight people's great weight-loss.

A31 – My definition of success in terms of weight-loss is as follows: "A good day for me is when I didn't overeat to satisfy my emotions, when I use more fat free products to combat high cholesterol or have a moderate fat intake".

A32 – I have decided to not have any rules for myself anymore because it doesn't work for me. So the only rule for me is "low fat – healthy – low fat – healthy".

A35 – My fear of dying caused by my unhealthy lifestyle motivates me to strive for quality of life and a healthy lifestyle, because my family is important to me.

A36 – I am learning that my anger towards media and society with regards to their prejudices about "fat" people is a good excuse for me not to take responsibility in cultivating a healthy lifestyle. Not taking the responsibility makes me realise that I don't have respect for my own body and I inflict

pain upon my body by overeating, when I ignore my high cholesterol, eat until I can't anymore and to be obese.

A37 – I am learning that the term self-respect, not only pertains to my self-image but also to having respect for my body.

A38 – I am learning in the context of being in contact with my body, that my body's overweight is too heavy to carry, therefore I want to lose weight to lighten my body's burden.

A39 – I am learning that I do not need to nurture my mother and myself with food because I am responsible only for myself, my own happiness and health.

A40 – I am learning in the context of my self-portrait, that I am a fat and thin person. Thus there is a thin woman inside of me that struggles to come out.

A41 – I am learning that the crux of maintaining my unhealthy lifestyle is the feeling I have had for a long time that this is life and I cannot stop living just because I am so fat, therefore I think I tried to live with the right clothes, activities or whatever and then to pretend that my overweight never bothered me. Now I know I just used this as a cover up.

Theme 3: Constructive communication in action

A8 – I have the ability to create a verbal space for women to allow their voices to be heard with regards to their experiences with their relationship with food in excess.

A20 – I have the ability to hear my own and others' blaming games, which helps me to take responsibility for not nurturing myself with food but rather to talk about it, to reach alternative solutions.

Theme 4: Participating in creative arts and handiwork

Not applicable.

Theme 5: Taking initiative in business

Not applicable.

Theme 6: Personal abilities in action

A9 – Self-assertiveness helps me to say that I have the right to say to society-driven diets and the media: "Don't exploit my fat!"

A19 – I have the ability to use sense of humour and problem-solving skills with regard to my relationship with food in excess.

A21 – I have the ability to recognise the bottom line concerning my relationship with food in excess "the buck stops here".

A22 – When I take an emotional distance from my dysfunctional patterns with regards to my relationship with food in excess within my relationship with my mother, I am more in control of a healthy lifestyle.

Theme 7: Story before marriage when I was fit and thin

Not applicable.

Theme 8: Participating in alternative ways of taking care of myself

A23 – I have the ability to plan my time spent on nurturing myself with healthier ways than food.

A27 – I am keeping a reflexive journal with regards to my own thoughts and feelings surrounding my relationship with food in excess.

A28 – I am dealing with my emotions to help myself to get a grip on my unhealthy eating patterns, because I realise that some of the things that I am angry about towards my mother, will never change. This is a peacemaking process for me to try to accept the things I cannot change.

A33 – Everyday I plan my time, food intake and exercise, step by step, morning to morning. That's what I commit myself for. In general I commit for low fat.

Theme 9: Prospective healthy lifestyle

A5 – Being in contact with my body's voice with regards to cholesterol and overweight having detrimental effects help me to take responsibility to have a healthy lifestyle.

A10 – I vote for the value of exercise and find it enjoyable.

A11 – Physical exercise is helpful to prevent medical illness and enriches the quality of my life and therefore doing exercise is an important element to have a healthy lifestyle.

A13 – I am striving to have a healthier relationship with food by nurturing myself with healthy food, because I love the richness and variety of food. When all else is said and done I want to come back to what I said to you in the first place: "I am passionate about food, man!"

A18 – I am accountable and responsible in practising my choice of how much food I consume and how much exercise I do.

A34 – Being in contact with my body's voice that I am unhealthy and sometimes in pain, is my friend more than my enemy and one of the greatest reasons why I am choosing a healthy lifestyle, because I don't want to die soon.

Theme 10: Prospect of taking care of physical appearance

A15 – An alternative meaning for my experience of overweight is that I am beautiful; I just have to go to extra trouble to beautify myself.

5 - Fifth participant

Theme 1: In relationship to self-worth, self-love and love from others

A25 – I have decided to accept myself.

A29 – I am comforting my body by physically holding my body in times of stress.

A41 – Experiencing my mother’s comforting message in a therapeutic context brings healing and comfort to me.

Theme 2: Learning experience and externalised decision

A4 – It doesn’t help blaming affirmative action for my financial stress, but it is my responsibility to have an entrepreneurial lifestyle.

A6 – I acknowledge the fact that God helps me in determining financial success, thus leaving me feeling more in control of my eating habits.

A7 – My mother’s voice “too much of a good thing isn’t good anymore” allows me to re-evaluate my eating habits and to commit to a healthy lifestyle.

A8 – Making my mother part of my life again helps me to take my thoughts away from overeating all the time and this works for me.

A10 – Rekindling memories of my mother has made me realise that I do not need food anymore to make me feel close to my mother again.

A11 – I have decided not to pity myself anymore but to focus on the good things and characteristics that I have.

A12 – I have decided that I have worked through the loss of my mother and I can handle it better emotionally by incorporating my mother in my life again.

A13 – I am exploring new ways of thinking about who I am and what I want to be, because I have considered too many people’s feelings as more important than my own, therefore keeping quiet and not allowing my voice to be heard.

A17 – I have made peace with the fact that my mother wasn’t there in times where I really wanted her to be there because I believe that she would have been there if she could.

A18 – For the first time in many years I feel that I have discovered myself as an individual again, separate from my mother.

A20 – I am exploring who I am and I know that I would like to be just who I am and not like others want me to be.

A23 – I want to be involved with other people’s lives and if I can help other people I would like to do that but not to the detriment of myself.

A24 – I make more time now to spend with my family and myself, thus family and personal time is very important.

A35 – I am experiencing myself in a new way, by being more in touch with my body, emotions and thoughts than before.

A36 – The loss of my mother has taught me that life is precious and must not be taken for granted.

A37 – I am learning that when I help others to the detriment of myself, both parties are disadvantaged.

A38 – I am learning to have authority when I say no to someone without losing my softness as a woman.

A39 – I am learning how to set boundaries with regards to what I am prepared to do for others or not.

A40 – I am learning that my mother is always with me and that I am important and good enough for her just like I am. This helps me to lessen my pain and my bad eating habits when I have periods of missing her tremendously.

A43 – I am learning that it is not necessary for me to be like my mother anymore and there are some good things about my mother that I still want to cherish.

A44 – I am learning that it has a positive influence on my relationship with my family when I set boundaries in helping others.

A46 – I am learning that I also have a physical body and that I need to incorporate my body into my thoughts and emotions.

A47 – When I acknowledge the fact that my body is also important to acknowledge in having a voice, I experience my body to be thankful and to be more a part of me.

Theme 3: Constructive communication in action

A1 – Saying no and setting boundaries to others is helpful when they want to take me for granted and misuse me.

A2 – I am listening to myself, children and husband regarding how to set boundaries to ensure that my families and my own needs are met.

A5 – Praying to God has helped me to eat less during times of financial insecurity.

A26 – Positive self-talk helps me to be in control of my eating habits.

A31 – I have decided to allow my body to speak to me more often and I would like to hear what she has to say.

A42 – I can actually handle anything in life when I share the good and the bad experiences with someone I can trust; and if I think about it I can see things differently and learn from my experiences.

Theme 4: Participating in creative arts and handiwork

Not applicable.

Theme 5: Taking initiative in business

Not applicable.

Theme 6: Personal abilities in action

A3 – My faith in God helps me to realise that it is not good to overeat.

A16 – I remember a time before my mother passed away where I was self-confident because I knew I wanted to do things in a certain way and I wouldn't allow anyone to change my mind. Whereas I think my mother would be more influenced because she had less self-confidence.

A19 – I have taken my uniqueness as a special quality I have.

A21 – I know that I am a people's person; I mean I can adapt to other people and talk to anyone.

A22 – I know that I am a caring and sharing person and this is how I want to be rather than snobbish and not caring.

A30 – Self-awareness allows me to be more in touch with my body.

A32 – Being a go-getter and having love for myself, helps me to overeat less.

Theme 7: Story before marriage when I was fit and thin

Not applicable.

Theme 8: Participating in alternative ways of taking care of myself

A9 – I have started to look for alternative ways to comfort myself emotionally with regards to the loss of my mother, for instance, to walk in the garden or to look at her photo or just to ask myself the question “why is it necessary to put something in my mouth if I am not really hungry?”

A27 – I am stopping myself to be a steam-roller, to just decide I cannot go further, I have to stand still and take time for myself in deciding what to do next, therefore taking care of my emotions and thoughts, rather than overeating to feel better about myself.

A33 – I am allowing myself to have more resting times in shorter periods of time.

A34 – Taking care of myself firstly, gives me more room than before to take care of my family and others.

A45 – I am allowed to not feel good, to feel sick, to be tired and to acknowledge it to others and then to take care of myself.

Theme 9: Prospective healthy lifestyle

A14 – I am more self-confident and more in control of my eating habits because I now know what I want out of life.

A15 – I decide what healthy food choices to make by weighing the advantages and disadvantages.

Theme 10: Prospect of taking care of physical appearance

A28 – I am taking care of my body and plan a healthy lifestyle more often on a daily basis to feel better about myself and my body.

R - Researcher-participant

Theme 1: In relationship to self-worth, self-love and love from others

A2 - My desire is to find comfort not in food but in my belief or knowledge that I am good enough and worthy, just because I am who I am and it does not matter what others say, I can only learn from this experience.

A44 - I am becoming my own mother and comforter as I want to take responsibility to fulfil my own needs.

A50 - My decision is to be healthy by accepting that I am a beautiful woman inside and out – body, mind and soul. Self acceptance is my friend and ally against “unwanted male attention” and “strive to be seen as equal to the male gender”. I know and accept the fact that I am unique in certain ways. I celebrate my womanhood! In knowledge of my physical beauty and attractiveness I decide to be me.

Theme 2: Learning experience and externalised decision

A1 – Interpersonal sharing relieves my lonely struggle to find what food means to me.

A3 - I am thinking of what my mother used to say when she was drenched in cancer – “No matter what happens to you in your life, it is how you handle it that makes the difference”!!! I have decided to make this learning my own.

A5 - I also realised that I do have a choice in times of stress to overeat or not to overeat.

A7 - My choice is thus to use externalisation of my problems and to go for many walks in times of stress, more often.

A9 - I have come to the realisation that “who I am” is in part portrayed by “how I look” or how I present my body and my body’s adornments or defects to others. “Who I am” could be much more than “how I look” and it could also be less than “how I look”. “How I look” could be seen from other people and my own point of view. Each one of us could have a different opinion on “how I look”.

A10 - The choice I have is in the reaction to and creation of “how I look” translated partly into “who I am”. I am now wondering about how to integrate the two concepts in my own perception of what I choose to be and to become.

A11 - As a child of nine years and older I started to question my father’s “always” trusting and positive attitude. I have decided that “I am not going to accept positive feedback from myself or others all the time.”

A12 - I want to know my fears and conquer them, I am taking full responsibility for my past hurts and I want to break free from my own blaming game that causes me to recycle my relationship with food in excess.

A14 - The way I am starting to see it now, is my sexuality is an integral part of my being healthy or unhealthy in my body, mind and soul. “My sexuality” is such a great gift to me being a woman and being human.

A16 - I discovered two years ago the main reason for me to lose my overweight and to maintain a healthy weight for the rest of my life. This reason is; or the need or the desire is: “I want (freedom of choice) to lose weight so that I can be healthier in mind, body and soul. My health is my choice and my responsibility to myself and my children. This is my legacy...”

A17 - One thing I have noticed about the freedom of choice is that it is an act of my will to carry out my decision about something. I think that if I connect or link my will to lose weight to my reason for being healthy, it could have a long lasting effect.

A18 - Unwanted male attention could become unwanted attention towards myself, specifically towards my image of a thin body. The unwanted attention towards myself allows “guilt” like “I am a bad girl” and “I need to become holier than men” to push me to excessive eating habits. The learning is to be aware of this.

A21 - Something I learned since my 21st birthday is that life or society sets people up to compare themselves to others and themselves on different levels and roles they have. I have discovered that I am unique, even though some people are better or worse at some things than me.

A24 - I have re-learned the power of “giving yourself permission to think about yourself or to nurture yourself” by listening clearly to this client’s story about possible solutions for a more balanced lifestyle in mind, body, soul and emotions.

A27 – I have realised that making healthy choices in my life means that “the buck does stop here”.

A28 - I am responsible for the amount and type of food I take in daily.

A30 – I take with me a sense of and the knowledge of “the buck stops here”, thus I am responsible for my own unhealthy or healthy lifestyle now and in the future.

A31 - I have re-learned that my body needs to voice her opinion in relation to my mind, emotions and soul, thus my body has a voice.

A32 - I have re-learned about my sense of hope in the experience that even though my mother has past away, she is with me every step of the way and that I am a person in my own right.

A34 – It is important to grow into a healthier person in my relationship with food.

A35 - I would like to see my own growth and others growth to a healthier body and mind.

A40 - I realise that it is my responsibility to help my body to fulfil its rightful place in my personality make-up.

A41 - I am experiencing a blooming friendship and reconciliation between my body, my mind and my soul. And I feel more whole than ever before.

A43 – I have learnt that my family have outgrown my rescuing act and this makes me feel a sense of loss, but at the same time a sense of release and relief.

A47 - I have a great sense of hope in the knowledge that I am not alone in this world. I did have a “good enough mother”, but most of all I was a “good enough daughter” during the thirty years I had the privilege to know her while she was still alive. My mother taught me so many good things. She did try her best to make me happy. I am re-learning and have learnt the importance of scouting out my own talents and to believe in myself that I can do it.

A48 - I would like to know what it means to have a healthy body and I would like to explore more ways as how to look after myself emotionally in the long run of my life’s journey. I want substance in body, mind and soul in maintenance and growth.

A49 – In relation to the threat “I am going to eat myself to the death, because you do not listen to me”; eating myself to the death is not an option anymore.

A51 - Consuming food is important for us as people/human beings to stay alive, thus to survive.

Theme 3: Constructive communication in action

A4 - I can turn a negative experience into a positive experience by giving voice to my belief that I did my best and I am good enough academic wise “no matter what the learned panel” says and most of all “no matter what fear of rejection shouts and tantrums about”.

A13 - The period of change to be more open about my “sexuality” was from 1987 to 1993, where I developed from a young teenager into a young adult. Since 1995, being married to my husband and experiencing sexual intercourse, I have realised the importance of talking about “sexuality”.

A15 - My choice is to talk about “sexuality” in my family and in safe places. As a therapist I have seen and heard myself express themes about “sexuality” to clients and colleagues. I am happy about this, because it helps me to celebrate my “sexuality” as being part of my womanhood.

A25 - I am aware of the healing factor of the possibility of staying in my room to deal with my sadness or anger or stress and to specifically give myself permission to take time out just for me. I also am familiar with the fact that this possibility to listen to myself is hard and difficult, because of the whisperings of fear sometimes that I am lazy or I am not supposed to be sick or feeling tired, that I am supposed to be superwoman and supposed to expect others to have super powers too; thus being very hard on myself for being good to myself.

A33 – By describing and understanding my discourses more clearly I hope to enrich myself as a person in my relationship with food in excess in the context of being holistically healthier.

A37 - Talking about my relationship with my body opens up so many different avenues or areas in my life and especially it’s relation to my relationship with food in excess.

A38 - In the process of my studies I have allowed myself to allow my body to have a similar voice to my mind and to my emotions.

A39 - If I choose to allow my body's voice to be heard in a significant time, space and relationship; it allows the whole me to have intimacy in physical pleasure, joy and sorrow or praise and worship.

Theme 4: Participating in creative arts and handiwork

Not applicable.

Theme 5: Taking initiative in business

Not applicable.

Theme 6: Personal abilities in action

A42 - I have a sense of "courage", "taking of responsibility" and "standing up for myself"!

A45 - I realise now that "self-pity" and her gifts are not my friend, because she wants me to be like her, always doubting others and myself to such an extent that I will shrivel up and die eventually. My decision is to say goodbye to "self-pity" and hello to new friends who really appreciate me and want to be honest and truthful with me about my "bad" feelings...friends that would look out for me in times of trouble, so that I would be healthy. Self-awareness could be one of my new friends.

A46 - I am learning that my choice is to be more open about my relationship with "self-pity" and to not allow "self-pity" to intrude upon my relationship with "honesty towards myself and others" about my relationship with food in excess.

Theme 7: Story before marriage when I was fit and thin

Not applicable.

Theme 8: Participating in alternative ways of taking care of myself

A6 - It is a challenge for me to figure out in which other ways I could combat stress and comfort myself at the same time. Something familiar to me is to go for a walk or for several walks when I feel stressed or upset. Walking helps me to feel more relaxed and to release my pent-up energy. After walking my mind is clearer and I feel better and I can focus on what is important.

A26 - I am searching for more sustainable "nurturing places" for myself and have found that time out with myself in thinking in my room for a whole day or two, writing, drawing or taking a prayer retreat away from home have been difficult places, but very helpful and liberating.

Theme 9: Prospective healthy lifestyle

A19 - So I have decided to lose 52kg "as good as I can with responsibility", thus to follow my weight management program 80% and above.

A20 - I decided that I have a choice to be healthy or not to be healthy and that my so-called diet can only become a healthy lifestyle pattern of eating, if I "free myself from society-driven diets", where Weigh- less expects from me to go to their group meeting once each week. I don't like the group meetings and decided that I will not go to the group meetings, but to weigh in each week is non-negotiable. I decided that the strict weighing of food will only be for one month and for new foods

that are unknown to me, so that I can learn how to lead a normal and balanced life and have a good eating pattern. I want to enjoy healthy food in a new way.

A22 – I have decided that my relationship with food translated as “I eat for my mother” will not ring true anymore. Thus “I eat to be healthy and have quality of life”.

A23 - My “tornado” experience or binge eating has become small, so very small and I thank the clients for helping me in describing my own story about my “tornado” experiences with food.

A29 - I like what Covey says about balance:” Balance is not either/or, but it is **and**.” This brings me back to my client’s and my discourse surrounding “all or nothing”. I am realising daily now that my taking of responsibility for my healthy lifestyle will be a lifetime process and that the choice to live healthy is up to me and it is a daily decision. My overall reason to lose weight and then to maintain my goal weight can only be to be healthy and hopefully this is a sustainable reason.

A36 - I acknowledge that I have a more whole or/and healthier outlook and experience of my body space.

Theme 10: Prospect of taking care of physical appearance

Not applicable.